
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Landmark/District:	Capitol Hill Historic District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	601 Massachusetts Ave, N.E.	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent
ANC:	6C	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
		<input type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Meeting Date:	March 23, 2023	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Case Number:	23-040	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

Applicant Schmidt Development seeks concept review for demolition of a non-contributing building and construction of a three-story brick semi-detached building on the same lot in the Capitol Hill Historic District.

Property Description

Records show a one-story commercial structure on the property as early as 1907, although the current iteration of the building appears to date from 1950. As the building displays few, if any, of the distinctive architectural features found on many of Capitol Hill's remaining one-story commercial buildings and appears to be heavily altered, the Board determined it to be non-contributing in 2003 in relation to a previous concept proposal (HPA 03-112).

Proposal

The existing building and shed would be demolished and a new building erected. The new building would occupy a larger footprint than the existing and be three stories. The rear garden wall would be removed and replaced with a low metal hairpin fence that would also wrap around to the front.

The new building would be clad in brick and would have a projecting bay along the Massachusetts Avenue elevation, a projecting bay along the 6th Street elevation, and a faceted hexagonal bay at the corner. All windows would be one-over-one hung sash; at the bays and tower, windows would be paired with a mullion and flat brick header. Along the flat elevations the windows would be single and topped by arched brick headers. Belt courses separate the floors and there is a water table at ground level. The cornice line continues along the flat walls and tower, although the tower is taller. The bays both have cornice lines that are slightly lower. There is one main entry, with paired panel doors under a transom and arched brick header.

Evaluation

As the building is non-contributing, the standard for review is the project's general compatibility with the historic district. The proposal would match the height and rhythm of projections of the adjoining rows of three-story buildings. While it would be slightly taller, this is in keeping with

numerous examples of larger massing for corner properties. Additionally, there are numerous existing historic three-story buildings nearby on both Massachusetts Avenue and 6th Street.

The proposed building is compatible in height, massing, proportions, materials, and fenestration, but could benefit from some design refinement. The new building should have a consistent window and door header typology, either flat or arched, but not a combination. The windowsills should be cast stone, and headers could be too. The color palette of the building, a light tan-red, distinguishes it from the nearby red brick historic buildings while still being compatible; mortar should be specified to generally match the color of the masonry, as is typical on Capitol Hill.

The front areaway at Massachusetts Avenue, adjacent to the entry, should be revised to eliminate the above-ground railing. Either the railing should be revised to a flat grate, or the depth of the areaway reduced to less than 30 inches.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends the Board find the project to be compatible with the Capitol Hill Historic District, with revisions made to the design as outlined above, and delegate final approval to staff.

Staff contact: Moira Nadal



601 Massachusetts Avenue NE as seen from Massachusetts Avenue



601 Massachusetts Avenue NE as seen from Massachusetts Avenue



601 Massachusetts Avenue NE as seen from 6th Street



Block context along Massachusetts Avenue from Google Streetview